

pedition and the second was directed by Ewing Young of Tennessee. They passed along the southern rim of the Great Basin into the Mojave region, but south of what was later termed the Old Spanish Trail.

"The first company on record to go completely through Utah and on to California over the Old Spanish Trail was a group of fur traders led by William Wolfskill. In 1830 they entered eastern Utah. They arrived at the Sevier River in the central part of the state and followed its course southward. The group left Utah near its southwest corner, crossed the desert, passed over Cajon Pass, and continued on into Los Angeles.

"Upon arriving at California, Wolfskill and his partners found more profit in purchasing mules and taking them back to Santa Fe than in the fur industry. The mule traffic continued to be a profitable business until displaced by the railroad," the teacher explained.

"Who were the next people to visit Utah, Mr. Madsen?" Robert inquired.

"In the next few years, Robert, a number of trappers, traders, scouts, and explorers followed Wolfskill's route through Utah. Upon leaving Santa Fe they went north into Colorado and then northwest to the junction of the Green and Colorado rivers in Utah. Then they struck out boldly across the desert through Utah, leaving the state near St. George where Highway 91 runs at the present time. This route became known as the Old Spanish Trail.

"And now, students," Mr. Madsen remarked, "we have finished our discussion of that particular portion of the story of Utah during the Spanish and Mexican periods which deals with the history of our neighbors to the south. Our attention will now focus on the mountain men or fur traders — Ameri-

cans and Canadians — who came into Utah from the north and east."

Helen Williams exclaimed, "I do hope that the story of the fur traders will be as interesting as the stories of the Spanish and Mexican explorers and traders in Utah have been. We have enjoyed them so much."

"Oh, I am sure that this portion of our Utah history course will be just as absorbing," the teacher replied.

#### *Thinking, Remembering, and Discovering*

1. Search in your library for additional Indian legends that led the Spaniards to explore in what is now the United States.
2. What did Coronado and Cardenas find on their exploring trips?
3. What actions by other countries caused the Spaniards to start settlements in California?
4. Father Escalante traveled through much of Utah. Name some of the places that he visited. Locate them on a map.
5. What impressions did Father Escalante have of the Yuta Valley?
6. Make a list of the hardships endured by Father Escalante and his party.
7. After Escalante, other expeditions came to Utah. Name the various groups and give some of the reasons that brought them here.
8. On a map of the United States, trace the routes followed by the various Spanish exploring parties.
9. Imagine that you were traveling with Father Escalante. Write several entries for your journal that will relate some of your experiences.
10. The Spanish started colonies in New Mexico and California but none in Utah. Can you think of any reasons for this?

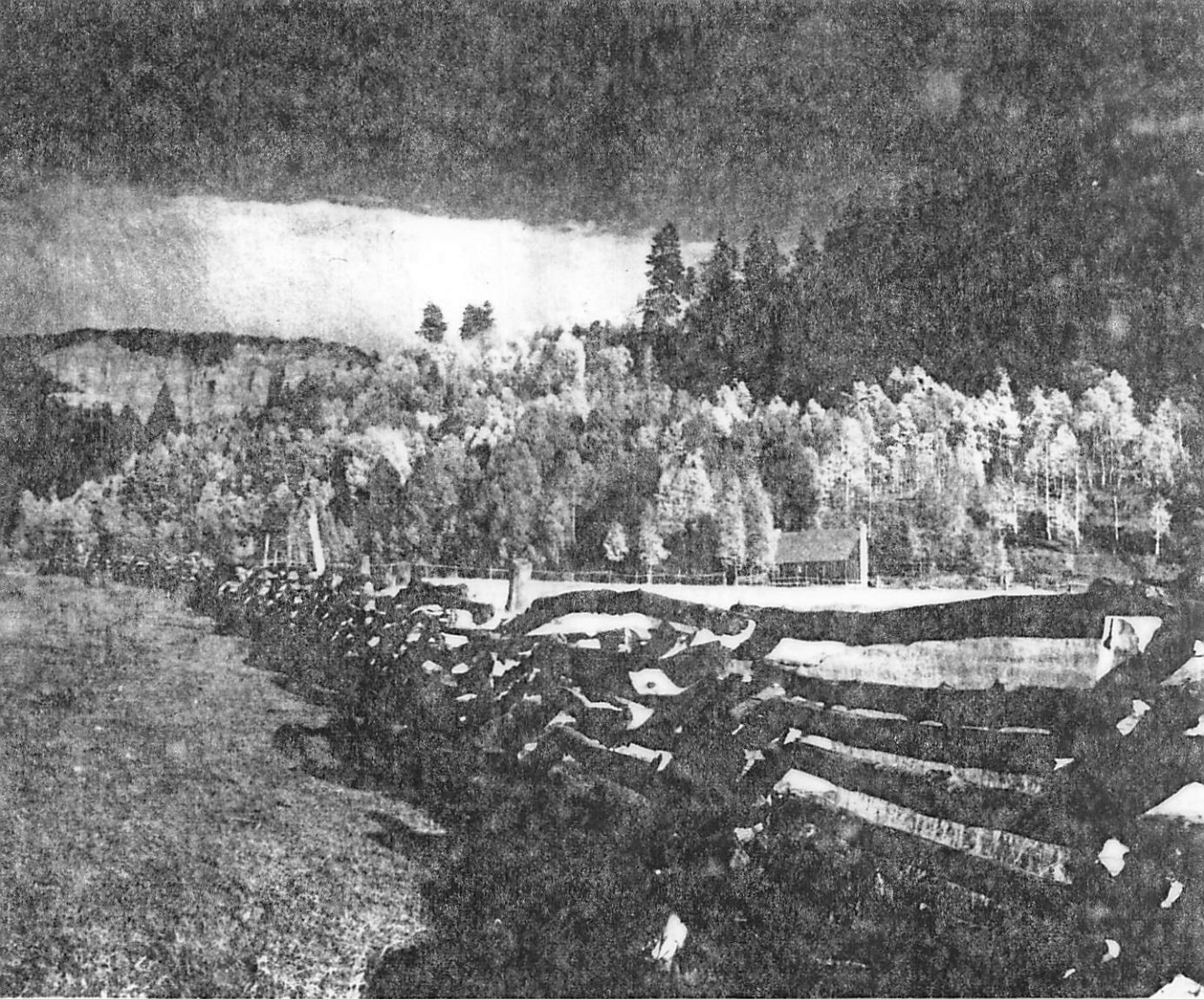


Photo — courtesy Utah Publicity Dept.

A fall scene at Wood's Ranch in mountains east of Cedar City

Spain brought about a condition which had a certain amount of effect on Utah history. The people in Santa Fe needed manufactured goods. They were much closer to the United States than to Mexico City. However, Spanish law forbade her colonists from trading with any foreign nation.

"When Mexico won her independence from Spain in 1821, conditions changed. Almost immediately a trade route was opened between Independence, Missouri, or Kansas City, Kansas, both places located on the Missouri River, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. This route was known as the 'Santa Fe Trail.'

Trade flourished, especially from 1822 to 1843.

"The prairie schooners — large wagons drawn by several spans of mules — were used in hauling goods over the trail. This new industry brought about a demand for many mules. California was the main source of supply, and Santa Fe was the central base of exchange.

"This newborn commerce of the prairies," he stated, "again brought attention to Utah as a possible shorter route to California. In 1829 two groups of trappers crossed from Santa Fe to California. The first was a Mexican ex-

leys, and deserts of our lovely state. Their trip through the center of Utah was made more than 70 years before the Mormon pioneers pitched camp on the desert lands east of the Great Salt Lake."

"I think those Catholic padres had a thrilling journey, Mr. Madsen, don't you?" Stephen Kirk remarked.

### **Spanish and Mexican traders in Utah**

"Mr. Madsen," Mary McDonald asked, "did Father Escalante return to Timpanogos Valley and establish a mission, as he had promised the Indians that he would do?"

"No, Mary," the teacher replied; "nor did the Spanish government follow up the work of the Dominguez-Escalante expedition with further efforts to open a route from Santa Fe to Monterey. Spain was at war in Europe and that took all the government's attention."

The teacher continued, "Further explorations were left to the individual free trappers and traders, who were more concerned with their own affairs than with world politics. These Spanish traders left very little information regarding their activities. But a letter written by the governor of New Mexico in 1805 shows that there had been rather close connections between the Yuta Indians and the Spaniards from the days of Escalante.

"The letter stated that a Spaniard named Manuel Mestas had served 50 years as a Yuta interpreter and had helped the Yuta Indians recover horses which had been stolen from them by the Comanche Indians."

### **Arze-Garcia expedition, 1813**

Mr. Madsen also explained, "Further evidence of Spanish contact with Yuta Indians is contained in a recently discovered document in the Spanish library of New Mexico. It tells of a trading ex-

pedition conducted by Mauricio Arze and Legoa Garcia in 1813. They and five companions went to Timpanogos Lake, remained three days among the Yutas, and then returned to New Mexico.

"The document states that while they were at Timpanogos Lake, the Indians were anxious to sell them native women and children for slaves, and that the Spaniards refused to make the purchase. Thereupon the red men became hostile and began killing the Spaniard's horses. Perhaps it will be impossible ever to learn whether or not this was the real reason for the natives' hostility; however, the fact remains that the chief got his braves to cease their warlike actions.

"Under those conditions, the Spaniards were in no mood to remain, and so they soon left the Yuta Valley for Santa Fe. At the Sevier River they met the bearded Indians of whom Escalante wrote.

"Regardless of whether or not Arze and Garcia refused to enter into the slave trade with the Timpanogos Indians it is a positive fact," said Mr. Madsen, "that other Spaniard and Mexican traders of that period did. In 1821 Utah passed from Spanish to Mexican ownership, and after that date trade increased. Principal articles of exchange were the Indian women and children who were carried into California and Old and New Mexico for slaves.

"After the Mormons arrived in Utah, however, Brigham Young and his associates, as will be pointed out later, stopped the traffic in human beings by passing laws against it and fixing severe punishment for the offenders."

### **Mexican trade and famous trails**

"Let me explain, students, that Mexico's winning of her independence from

didn't have enough clothing for snowy weather. A scouting party was sent out toward the west to find if possible an opening through the Sierras, but they returned with an unfavorable report. Meanwhile, the company had been detained for several days by a snowstorm.

"At a council meeting, Father Dominguez declared, 'Conditions are very critical. Judging from the report of the scouting party, the mountain passes leading to Monterey are fast becoming snowbound. Any attempt to cross them would mean almost certain death from cold and starvation. What shall we do?'

"Escalante replied, 'I propose that we return to Santa Fe by going southward to the Colorado River and then through the warmer country to Santa Fe.'

"It is my opinion," the teacher remarked, "that one factor which helped to determine the padre's decision was that he was anxious to get back to Santa Fe so they could return to Utah and establish a mission for the Yuta Indians. Whatever his reasons may have been, not all of the party immediately agreed.

"One of the soldiers remarked, 'We have been assigned to go to California. Some of us feel that we should continue our journey westward.'

"Again the Catholic priest spoke. 'Let us learn the will of the Lord by drawing lots on whether we should endeavor to reach Monterey or return to Santa Fe.' The group agreed to let the Lord decide. The lot said return, a decision no doubt welcomed by the padres. In the words of Escalante: 'We all accepted this, thanks be to God, willingly and joyfully.'

"And so," Mr. Madsen went on, "the Spanish explorers headed back toward Santa Fe. They passed near the present site of Milford, through Cedar Valley, over the Black Ridge and down Ash

Creek to where it empties into the Virgin River in Utah's present Dixie. After fording the river, the party trudged on over the site of the present Hurricane City and along the Hurricane Ridge. Then they went southwest over the famous Red Hills into the plateau region of what is now Arizona.

"After a difficult 23-days' journey over the rugged and barren wastes along the north side of the Colorado Grand Canyon, the home-bent party finally succeeded in crossing the deep, awe-inspiring chasm. By carving stone steps into the canyon walls, they managed to cross the Rio Colorado at Padre Creek, so named in 1937 when it was discovered that the Spanish party had forded the river here rather than at the so-called Crossing of the Fathers a mile west, as had formerly been supposed.

"On November 24, when they reached the Moqui villages in northern Arizona, they were weak and exhausted. There they remained for nearly three weeks and then continued their journey. On January 2, 1777, the party of Spanish explorers arrived at Santa Fe, having been gone over five months on their expedition."

"Did they carry all their food with them?" Robert asked.

"Why, of course not!" exclaimed Jane. "It would have been impossible."

"That's correct, Jane," the teacher agreed.

"During their wanderings, the party members had suffered considerably from hunger and thirst. Wild roots, pine nuts, and the flesh of some of their horses had kept them from starving to death.

"Much of the time of their trip had been spent in Utah. They had traveled 2,000 miles. This journey had led the first party of white men of which we have record across the mountains, val-

"On September 16 the travelers, following an Indian trail, headed westward through Utah. They crossed the divide at the head of Spanish Fork Canyon. From this point they caught their first view of the Yuta Valley lying below."

### Escalante's Party in Yuta Valley

"The weary party traveled down the canyon to its mouth, crossed to the south side of the stream, and ascended a small hill. From this point they saw for the first time Utah Lake.

"After viewing the beauties of the valley and the lake, they continued their journey downstream to a point about a mile east of the present town of Spanish Fork. Here, on September 23, they pitched camp. Escalante named the valley the 'Plain of the Sweet Name of Jesus.'

"Escalante was greatly impressed with the Yuta Valley and thought it a desirable site for an Indian mission. He concluded that the region could support as many pueblos (villages) as there were then in New Mexico. In his account, we have our very earliest description of the beautiful valley which the natives called Timpanogos.

"They called not only the valley, but also the mountains, the lake, and the Indians who lived in that region by the name of Timpanogos. But today only the massive mountain northeast of Provo still retains the name," Mr. Madsen explained.

"On September 24, while camped on the American Fork River near the lake, Father Escalante talked to the Indians on Christianity. He explained to them the meaning of the cross. Many natives gathered to hear the Catholic Father. This meeting is the first incident recorded in Utah history of Christian missionaries teaching the natives.

"The Indians showed so much interest in what the two Catholic padres had to say that Escalante became desirous of remaining with them. The Catholic father sympathetically promised:

'Red skinned brethren, you also are children of God. When we complete the work assigned to us by our white father, the king, we shall return to you with more priests and establish missions in Yuta. The white men shall teach you to plant and sow, and to raise herds of cattle, so that you will be able to eat and to dress like the Spaniards, to obey the law, and to live as God has commanded.'

"Pointing northward, Escalante asked, 'What kind of country lies in that direction?'

"'A lake, very, very large — many leagues,' replied an old chief. 'It is connected with Timpanogos Lake by a river. But its waters are very harmful and salty. Any part of one's body bathed in its waters becomes greatly inflamed at once.'"

### Journey from Yuta Valley to Santa Fe

The teacher continued, "After spending three days with the red men east of Utah Lake, the party of Spaniards and two Indian guides continued their journey, casting a farewell look at the beautiful Timpanogos lake, mountain, and valley on September 27. They traveled now in a southerly direction toward their goal, Monterey, following the route later used by the old Utah Central Railway. At the Sevier River Escalante and his group saw, for the first time, Yuta Indians with heavy beards, which gave them the appearance of Spaniards.

"When they arrived in Beaver Valley on October 5, their last Indian guide, Jose Maria, left them. The weather was growing cold. Snow covered all the surrounding mountains. By October 8 winter had set in with vigor. Deep snow had fallen in the valleys, and a cold wind was blowing from the north. The supply of food was almost gone, and they

Spaniards exploring Utah, class, let us trace the route they followed on a map.

"Although in 1776 Santa Fe had been founded for 171 years and Monterey since 1770, nobody had explored the country lying between the two Spanish outposts. The Dominguez-Escalante expedition, therefore, was organized at Santa Fe for the purpose of exploring the country between Santa Fe and California, and locating, if possible, the much-needed route. The company consisted of 10 men, including the two Franciscan Friars, Francisco Dominguez and Silvestre Velez de Escalante," the teacher explained.

"Isn't it interesting, Mr. Madsen, that this expedition was made the same year that our American forefathers signed the Declaration of Independence?" Barbara commented.

"Yes, Barbara, it was on July 29, 1776, only three weeks after the signing that the little Spanish band left Santa Fe. Father Escalante kept a journal of their travels. It is so vivid, detailed, and accurate that the route they traveled can be easily followed today.

"With saddle and pack horses, and with necessary food, clothing, and camp equipment, the courageous explorers headed northwestward. They also took along a supply of pocketknives, glass beads, and other articles to be used as presents for Indians.

"They traveled in a north and north-western direction through Colorado. In the mountains near Glenwood Springs, they came upon a band of Indians. The home of two of these natives, a man and a boy, was on the shores of far away Utah Lake. They were called Laguna (Lake) Indians. I would like to read to you students a statement from Escalante's journal:

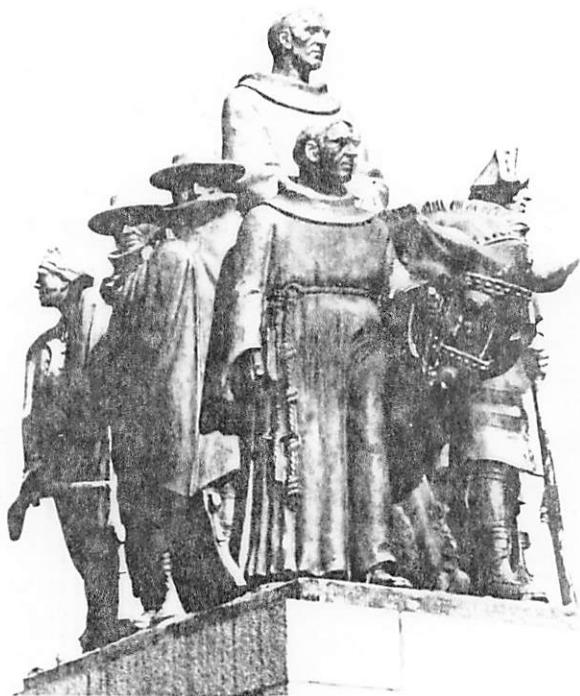
'We presented the [older] Laguna with a woolen cloak, a knife, and some white glass

beads, saying that we gave these to him so that he would accompany us and guide us to his country. He agreed to do so, and we gave them to him.'

"Their new guide," Mr. Madsen continued, "was provided with a horse, and the Indian boy was placed on the steed behind Don Juan Lain. The explorers continued their journey in a northwesterly direction to a point near the Utah-Colorado state line, almost due east of the north end of Utah Lake. Then they veered westward into Utah. Sixteen miles more brought them to a grove of cottonwood trees on Green River, three miles above Jensen, Utah, and not far from the famous dinosaur quarries. At that delightful spot, the men and animals rested for two days—September 14th and 15th. While doing so, Lain carved his name and 'YEAR 1776' in the bark of one of the big cottonwood trees. This writing was later discovered by Utah pioneers.

Statue of Father Escalante and party on  
"This is the Place Monument"

Photo—courtesy Wheelwright Lithographing Co.





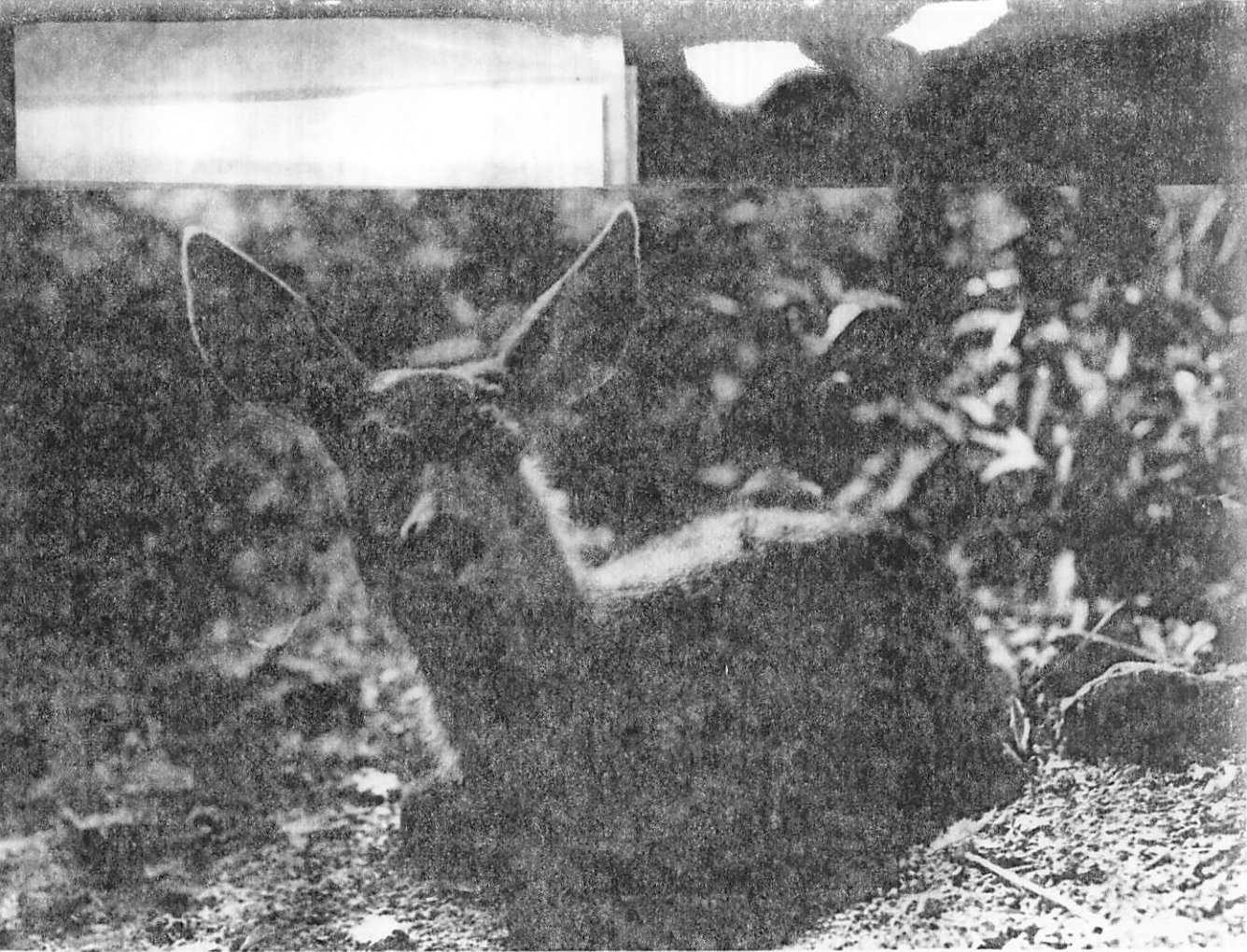


Photo — courtesy U.S. Forest Service

A fawn mule deer

South America. The country was too vast for her to make good her claims through exploration and colonization; nevertheless, she succeeded in colonizing most of the western hemisphere south of Utah.

“However, the vast Great Basin region of our state remained unexplored until pressure was brought upon Spain by Russia and England in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Russia was advancing down the Pacific Coast from the northwest. British trappers, explorers, and seamen were also exploring the western part of North America. This international rivalry for the ownership of the New World caused Charles III, King of Spain, to take steps to save California from falling into the hands of other nations.

“He commanded Jose de Galvez, the king’s representative in Mexico, to direct the colonization of California from Mexico City. Between 1769 and 1774, San

Diego, Monterey, San Francisco, and other important sites in California were settled by Spanish colonists. Soldiers were placed there also to protect the settlers from Indians and from trouble with whites from other European countries.”

Mr. Madsen further explained, “As you know, Monterey, California, was hundreds of miles from Mexico City. Rugged mountains made the overland route connecting the two places very difficult to travel. Santa Fe, located in the center of the present state of New Mexico, was settled by the Spaniards in 1605. This was two years before the first English colonists arrived in America. This village was much nearer the Spanish towns in California than was Mexico City. Also it was connected with Mexico by a route quite easy to travel.”

**Father Escalante explores Utah in 1776**

The teacher suggested, “As we tell the story of Escalante’s company of

now New Mexico, but to their disappointment the cities were no more than Indian pueblos (villages) inhabited by the Zunis. One could easily guess that Coronado was greatly disappointed when he learned that the Indian villages had no gold nor precious stones of any kind. He had spent his \$200,000 and in return had gained no wealth. He and his soldiers had marched for months, had experienced hunger, had fought and bled — and all for gold that did not exist,” the teacher explained.

#### **Cardenas' discovery of Grand Canyon**

“Mr. Madsen, did Coronado and his soldiers become discouraged and return to Mexico City?” John Brown asked.

“No, not yet,” was the reply. “The Zuni Indians — probably with the hope of getting rid of the Spaniards — said to them, ‘The fabulous wealth you are seeking lies farther to the northwest.’ Pointing in that direction they continued, ‘A great mystic river over yonder has cut an immense chasm into the earth that no man has ever been able to cross.’

“Eagerly listening to the red men’s tale and being anxious to obtain the gold, Coronado sent one of his captains, a man named Garcia Lopez de Cardenas, with twelve men to explore to the north and west.

“Cardenas’ party marched for 20 days, passing through the Painted Desert of Arizona, and came upon the wonder of wonders — the Grand Canyon. These explorers stood upon the high plateau-like banks and looked far down into the depths of the mighty canyon. More than a mile below them they saw the muddy waters of the Rio Colorado rushing along.

“‘Look!’ one of the Spaniards exclaimed, ‘The river appears to be no more than six feet across, although the Indians told us that it is half a league wide.’

“For three days Cardenas and his men searched along the rim of the canyon for a passage leading down to the water. One morning three men crept down over the ledges in their attempt to descend to the stream. At the close of the day they returned, and in their report to Cardenas, said, ‘We found it impossible to descend to the stream. Distances and objects are larger than they seem to those looking down from above. Rocks that appear to be no taller than a man are larger than the cathedral in Seville, Spain.’”

#### **Cardenas' arrival at border of Utah**

Mr. Madsen explained, “In their search for a descent into the great gorge, Cardenas’ exploring party passed along the south bank of the Colorado River. Their exact route is not known; however, most historians believe that they traveled northward across the present line of Arizona into Utah. If that is true, Spaniards were the first Europeans to enter our state.”

He continued, “After completing their explorations, Cardenas and his men returned to Cibola. Later they were joined by Coronado’s party which had been exploring farther northeastward into the present United States. The entire group of Spaniards returned to Mexico City with a very discouraging report. The result of this report was that 236 years passed before another Spanish expedition entered Utah. This exploring party was led by Father Escalante in 1776. Before telling the story of Escalante’s visit to our state, I should describe the Spanish claims and activities in western United States at that time.”

#### **Spanish claims and activities**

“Following the discovery of the New World, Spain laid claim to the western half of North America and to most of



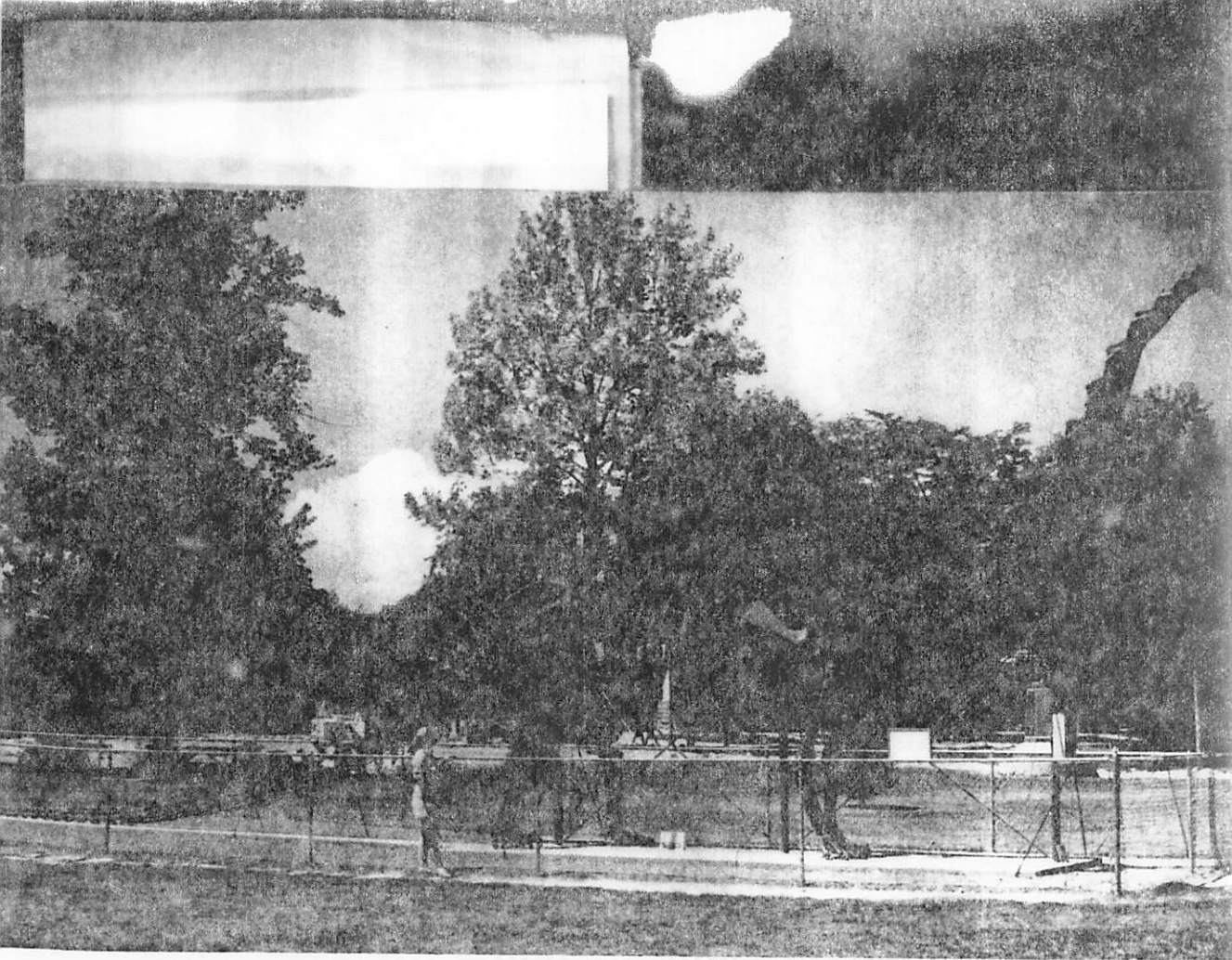


Photo — courtesy Utah Publicity Dept.  
Full-size replica of extinct *Diplodocus* dinosaur at Utah Field House of Natural History, Vernal

there are cities which glitter with gold.' A Spanish Catholic missionary was sent with Indian guides to find the seven cities supposed to contain such wealth. He saw only one of them from a hilltop, became frightened, and returned to Mexico City with an exaggerated story regarding the abundance of gold in the 'Seven Cities of Cibola.'

"What did the people in Mexico City think about his report?" a student named Stephen Kirk asked.

"Naturally they believed him," Mr. Madsen replied; and then he continued, "There was great excitement as they listened to the missionary's story. Mendoza, the viceroy (governor) of Mexico, immediately (1539) appointed Francisco Vasquez de Coronado to lead an exploring expedition into the unknown country to the north in search of the cities of Cibola. Coronado paid for equipping a small army from his personal wealth. It cost him \$200,000. He believed that

when he conquered the cities of Cibola and obtained the gold, he would be wealthier and greater than Cortez. Thoughts of the empires he would conquer and make his own filled his mind with dazzling dreams.

"History claims that Coronado's army was composed of about 300 of the sons of Spanish nobility. They carried lances and swords, wore coats of shining armour, and rode on the best horses that the Spaniards could furnish. Negro and Indian servants went along to drive cattle which were to be killed as food for the soldiers. The Spaniards marched and marched through mountains, valleys, and deserts for hundreds and hundreds of miles."

"But sir, did Coronado and his men find the cities filled with gold?" a student named Elizabeth Fox curiously asked.

"Yes, Elizabeth, they found the seven cities of Cibola far up in what is

## 7 Story of Utah's Spanish and Mexican Periods

*"Utah Story" by Milton R. Hunter*

### Utah owned by Spain and Mexico

"Did you know, class, that following the discovery of America by Columbus Spain became the first owner of the country that is now Utah?" Mr. Madsen remarked. And then he continued, "When Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, Utah passed into Mexican ownership. It remained a part of Mexico until the year following the arrival of Brigham Young and his band in the Salt Lake Valley. Through a treaty with Mexico in 1848, Utah became part of the United States.

"Perhaps, also, it is of interest to you to learn that in 1540, which was nearly 70 years before our English ancestors settled Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607—their first American colony—Spanish explorers had arrived at the southern border of Utah."

### Coronado's search for Cibola

"Mr. Madsen, I have heard that the Spaniards had their American headquarters in the City of Mexico at that time. If so, why did they, at that early date, come more than 2,000 miles northward, traveling through mountains and deserts, to visit the border of Utah?" Jane Brown asked.

"They were searching for treasures—gold and silver, Jane," Mr. Madsen replied. "In Mexico they had found mineral wealth in abundance. This caused them to desire more wealth. Indians brought them stories of an abundance of gold in other parts of the country, accounts which they accepted as true. Among the tales told the Spaniards were those regarding the 'Seven Cities of Cibola.' The Indians, pointing northward, said, 'In the direction you're going

A fall scene in Big Cottonwood Canyon, one of six canyons in Wasatch Mountains east of Salt Lake City



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